

# STARBLAZER

SPACE FICTION ADVENTURE IN PICTURES No. 156

24p



MORE THAN A ROBOT! MORE THAN A KILLING MACHINE! IT WAS ...

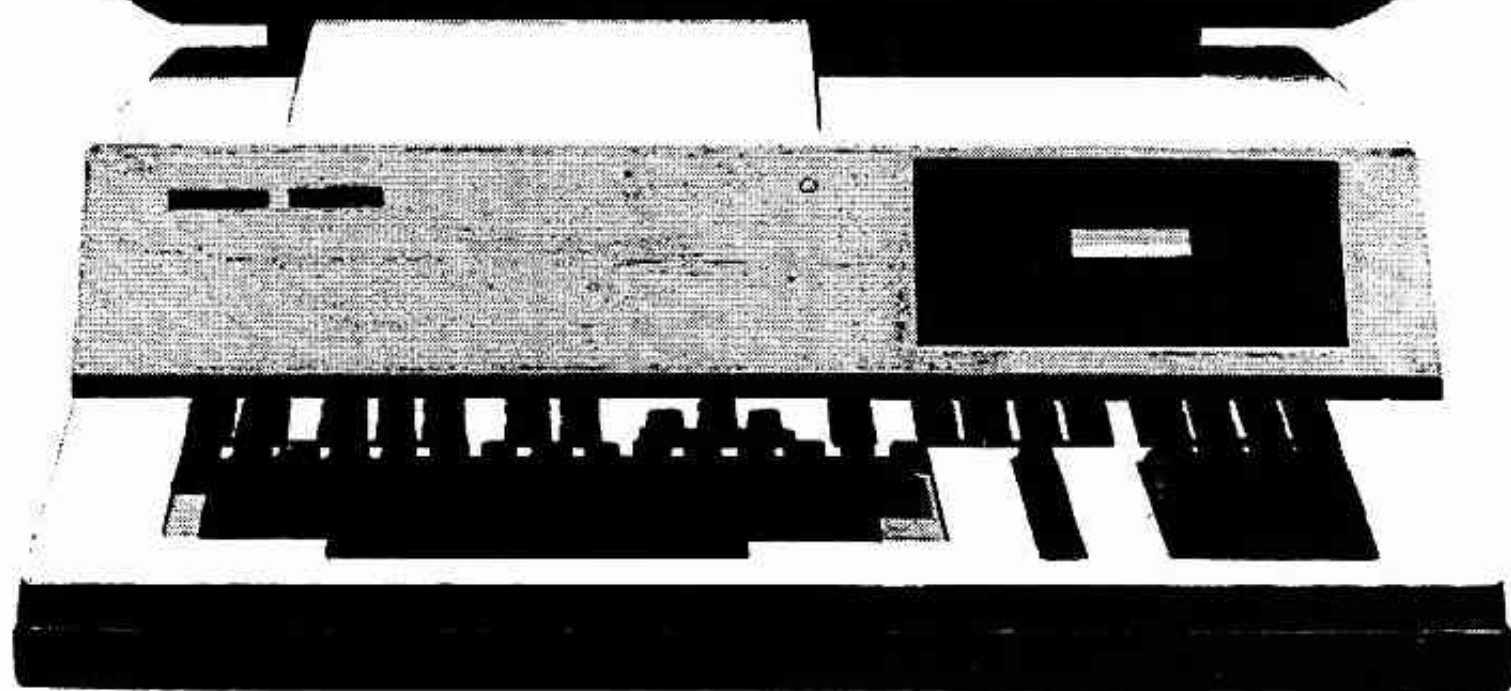
## THE SYGMA WARRIOR

... AND IT WAS MAD.

# STARBLAZER

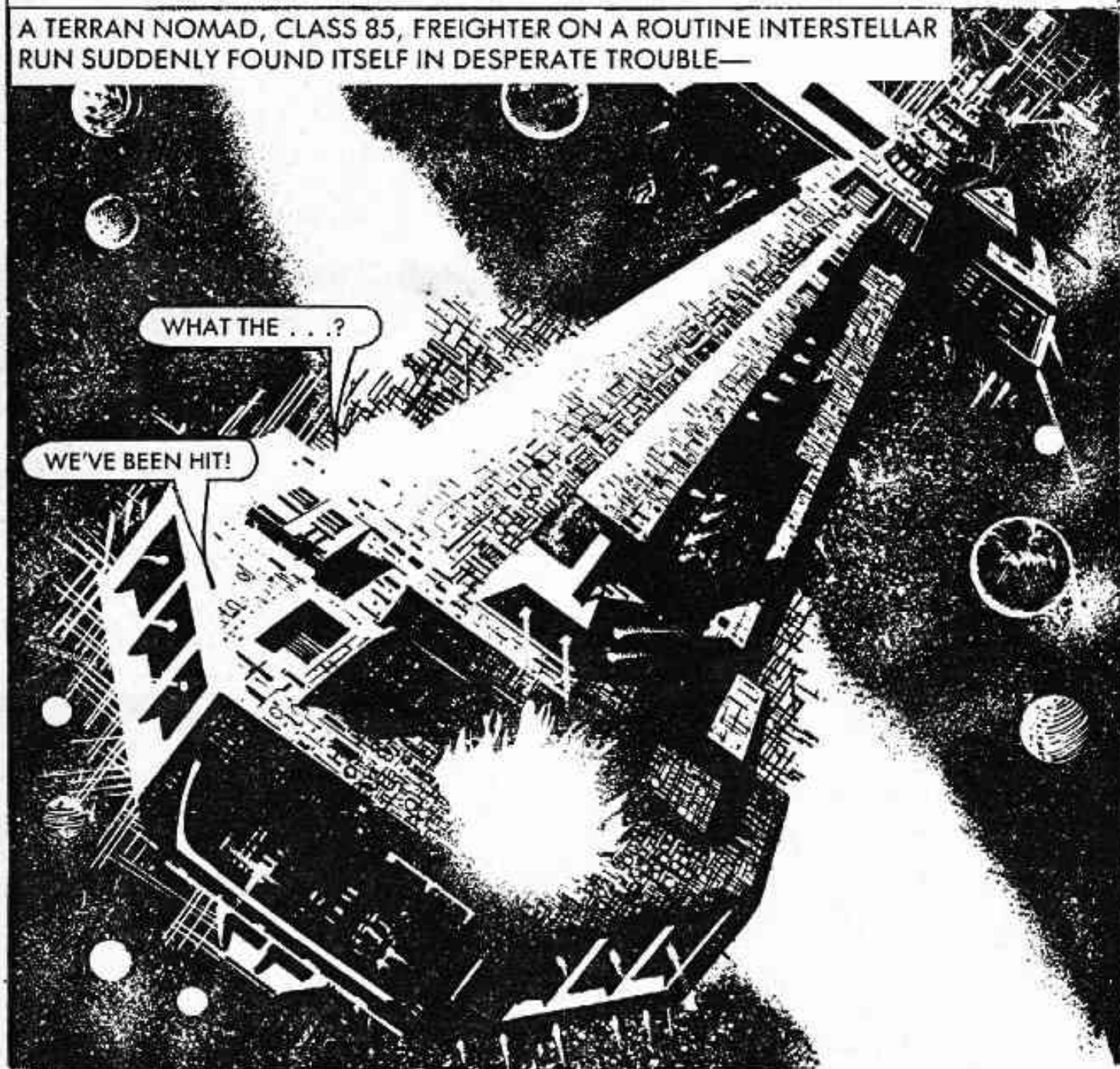
The Fourth Thermal War had been over for more than 900 years — peace reigned in The Galaxy. The Terran Empire had outlawed all forms of armed conflict and most weapons had been banned. Only a small, lightly protected Empire Defence Force remained, with little to fear from the odd space smuggler who surrendered without a struggle. Peace and prosperity had dulled Man's aggressive instincts.

But on June 20th, 3985 in quadrant 907 something happened to change all that—



# THE SYGMA WARRIOR

A TERRAN NOMAD, CLASS 85, FREIGHTER ON A ROUTINE INTERSTELLAR  
RUN SUDDENLY FOUND ITSELF IN DESPERATE TROUBLE—







THE DISTRESS SIGNAL WENT OUT BUT BY THE TIME IT HAD BEEN SENT, NOTHING REMAINED OF THE FREIGHTER.



A FEW PARSECS AWAY—

I'VE PICKED UP A GENERAL  
DISTRESS CALL, SIR! QUADRANT 907.

PROCEED AT WARP  
SPEED, MINUS TWO!

MAJOR GOTH WAS COMMANDER OF ALPHA FLIGHT IN THE EMPIRE DEFENCE FORCE—

THERE'S ONLY CARGO SHIPS SCHEDULED FOR  
THIS SECTOR . . .



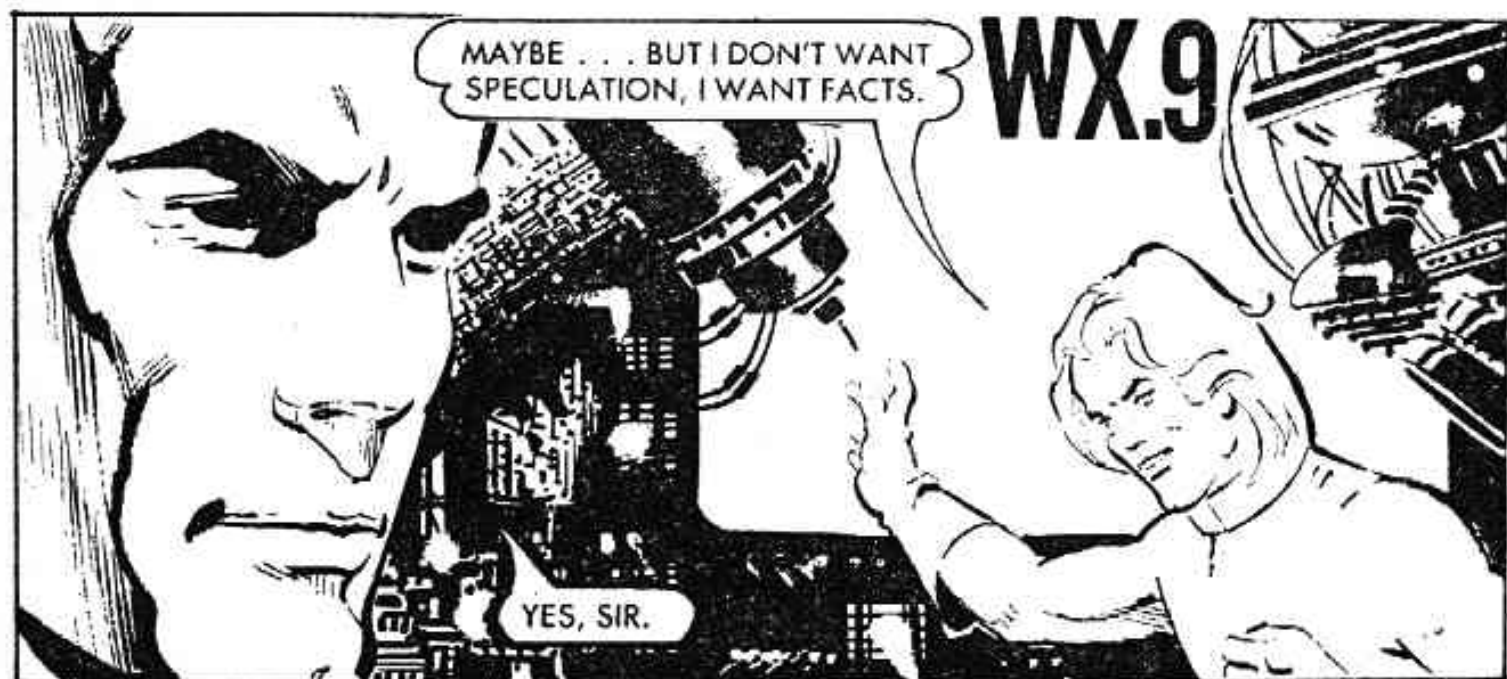
THE SHIPS TOOK ONLY A FEW HOURS TO REACH THE SPOT.

WE'RE HERE, SIR.

SENSORS PICKING UP SMALL RESIDUE OF  
DEBRIS. ANALYSIS INDICATES METALLIC  
COMPOUNDS.

THERE IT IS!  
HOW DID IT HAPPEN?

EXPLOSION, SIR OR SHOULD I SAY—IMPLOSION!  
SEE HOW THE DEBRIS IS NOT SCATTERED. AN  
EXPLOSION WOULD HAVE BLASTED THAT ACROSS  
THE GALAXY.







FACT ONE, MISTER KRAL —A MEGADRIVE WOULD EXPLODE SCATTERING DEBRIS OVER A WIDE AREA. THE NAVIGATOR SAID THAT DEBRIS IS NOT SCATTERED, WHICH INDICATES THAT IT WAS AN IMPLOSION . . .

IN ANOTHER QUADRANT A STRANGE CRAFT STAYED JUST OUT OF SENSOR RANGE OF A NEARBY PLANET. A PLANET OWNED BY THE EMPIRE'S LARGEST MINING CORPORATION—RIO ZIRCONCIUM.





ON THE PLANET'S SURFACE—



JUST THEN, AN EXPLOSION CAUSED A FEW MORE MALFUNCTIONS—





THE MYSTERIOUS ATTACK WAS  
BRUTALLY EFFECTIVE—



14 UNITS LATER MAJOR GOTH'S SECTION ARRIVED TO INVESTIGATE THE SUDDEN CESSATION  
OF TRANSMISSIONS—

SENSORS INDICATE NO LIFE  
FORMS ON PLANET SURFACE, SIR.

IMPOSSIBLE! THAT MINING PLANET HAD 500  
MEN. I'LL TAKE A SCOUTING PARTY DOWN IN  
THE SHUTTLE.




THE MINING COMPLEX LAY IN RUINS—

THEY MUST HAVE BEEN HIT  
BY A MASSIVE EARTHQUAKE!






GOTH TOOK DOWN A SQUAD—



THIS WAS NO NATURAL DISASTER, SIR. MY  
SCANNERS ARE PICKING UP EVIDENCE OF  
HIGH-ENERGY WEAPON DISCHARGE.

CAN'T BE!



HIGH ENERGY WEAPONS WERE  
BANNED AFTER THE GALACTIC CIVIL  
WAR. NONE ARE MADE NOW.

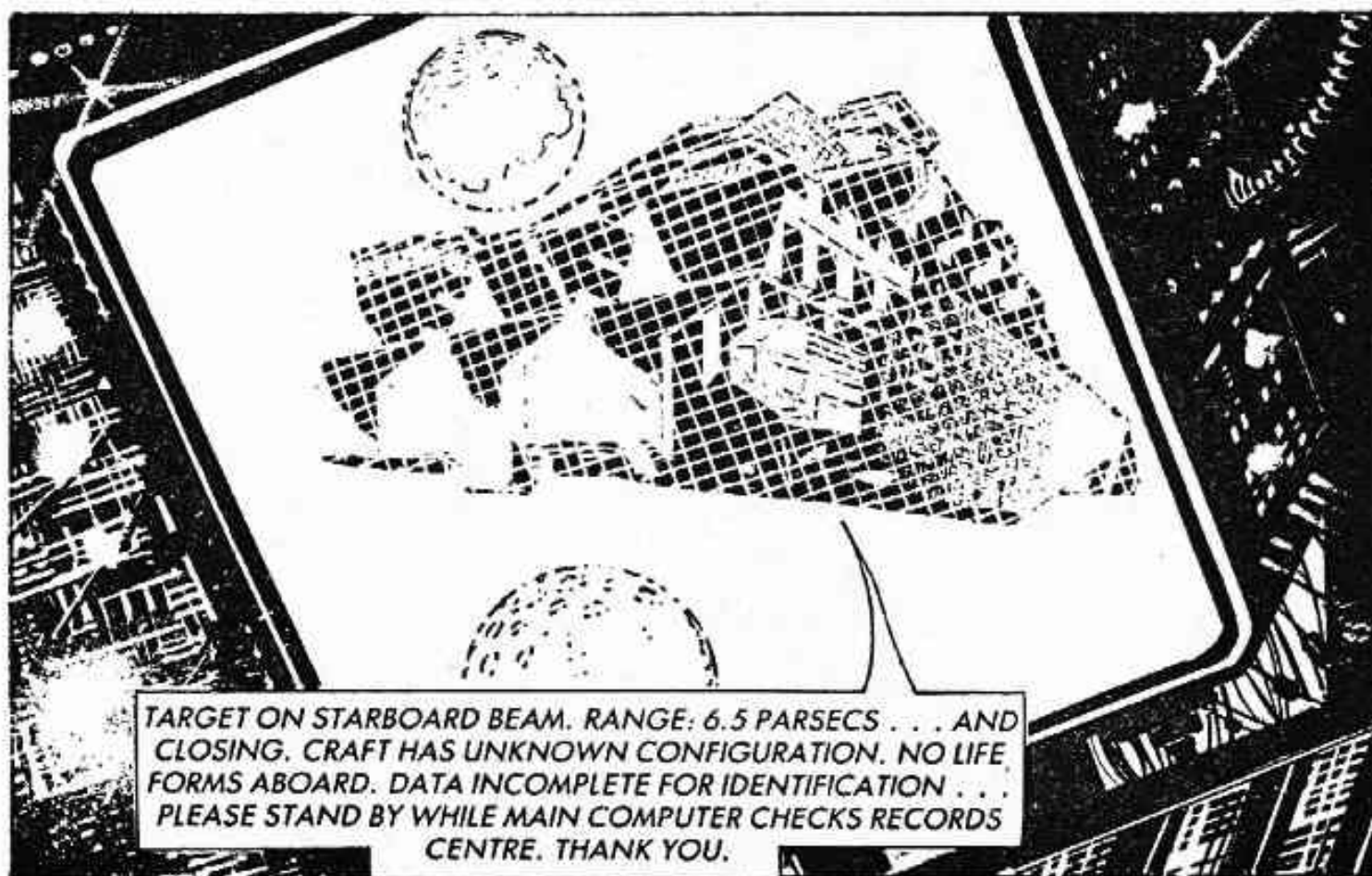




ABOARD GOTH'S SHIP—

I'M PICKING UP A SHIP ON  
LONG RANGE SENSORS, SIR!

YOU'D BETTER  
HAVE A LOOK AT THIS.







THE SUDDEN SURGE OF SPEED LEFT THE MISSILES NO TIME TO CHANGE COURSE.

THEY MISSED,  
BUT ONLY JUST!

I SUGGEST WE GET  
OUT OF HERE, SIR!

NO! WE'RE GOING TO  
ATTACK!



GIVE THE BATTLE COMPUTER OUR  
PRESENT POSITION—THEN ALERT THE  
REST OF THE FLIGHT. WE WILL CO-  
ORDINATE THE ASSAULT FROM HERE.

YES, SIR!



BUT . . .



THE MYSTERIOUS CRAFT RETALIATED WITH LETHAL PRECISION—







FEAR BEGAN TO GRIP MAJOR GOTH AND THE CREW OF THE LAST REMAINING PATROL SHIP—



THE CRAFT WARPED AWAY—

THEY ARE OUT OF EFFECTIVE  
RANGE, LEADER.

IT IS OF NO CONSEQUENCE. NO DOUBT  
WE SHALL MEET THEM AGAIN. RESUME  
PATROL STATUS—ALERT LEVEL THREE.

GOTH REPORTED TO E.D.F. COMMAND  
HEADQUARTERS—

IT MUST HAVE BEEN A GREAT SHOCK  
FOR YOU, MAJOR GOTH. WE COULD  
SCARCELY BELIEVE IT OURSELVES.

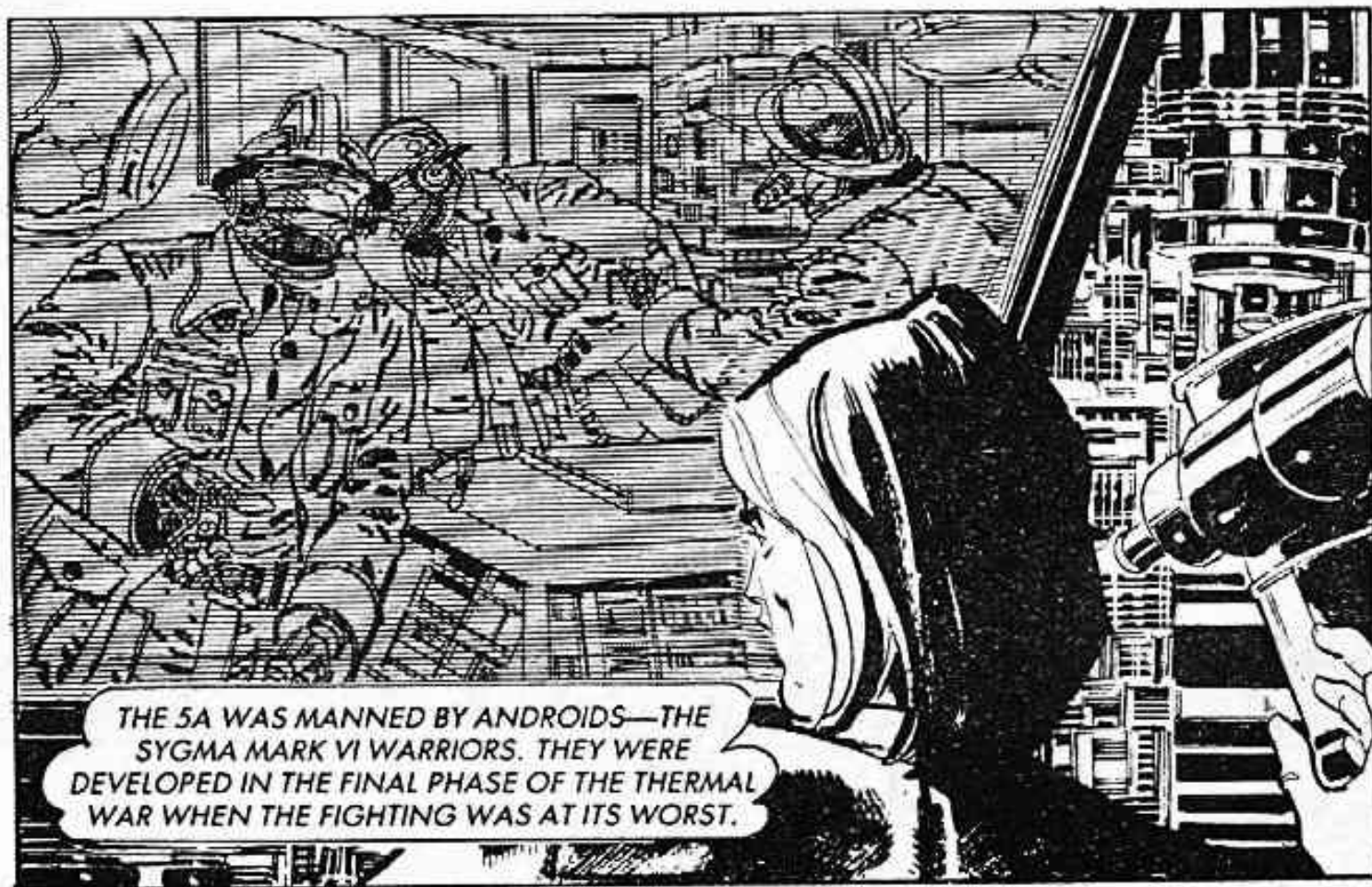
THREE SHIPS—BLOWN TO BITS!  
THEY NEVER STOOD A CHANCE.







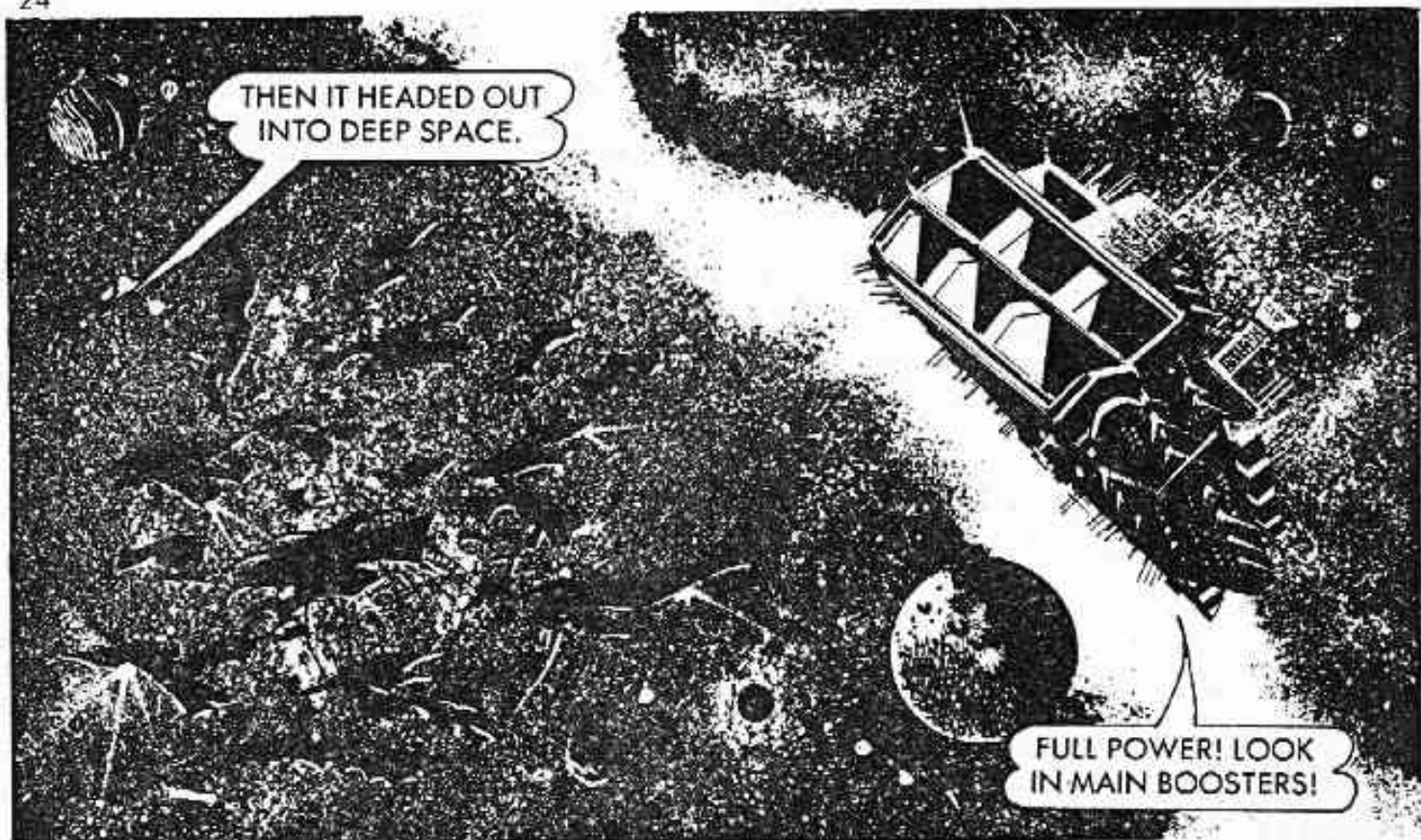




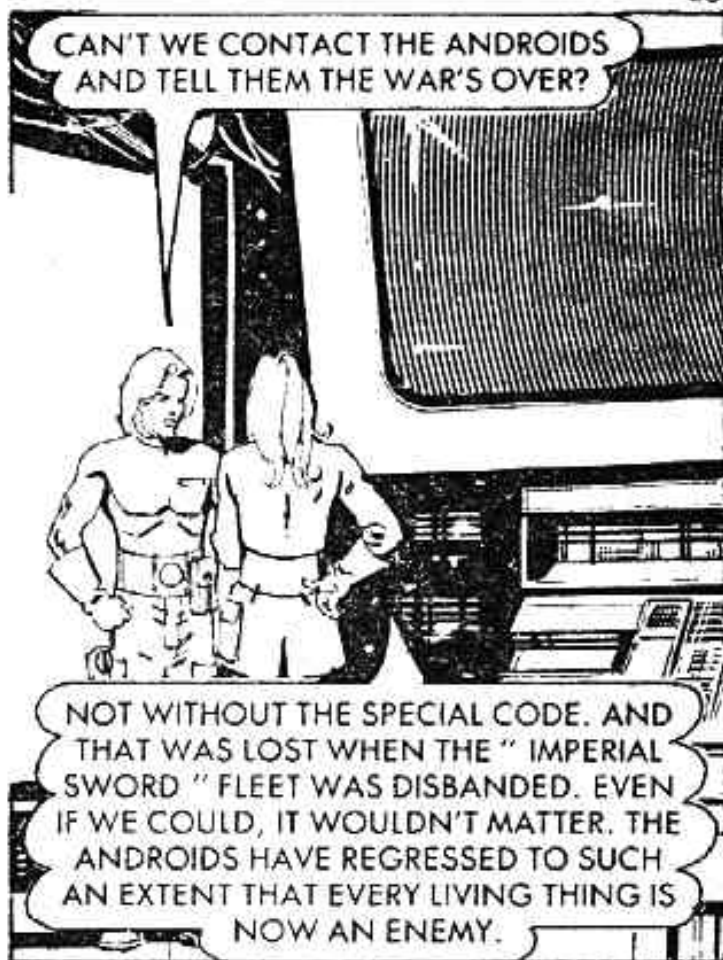
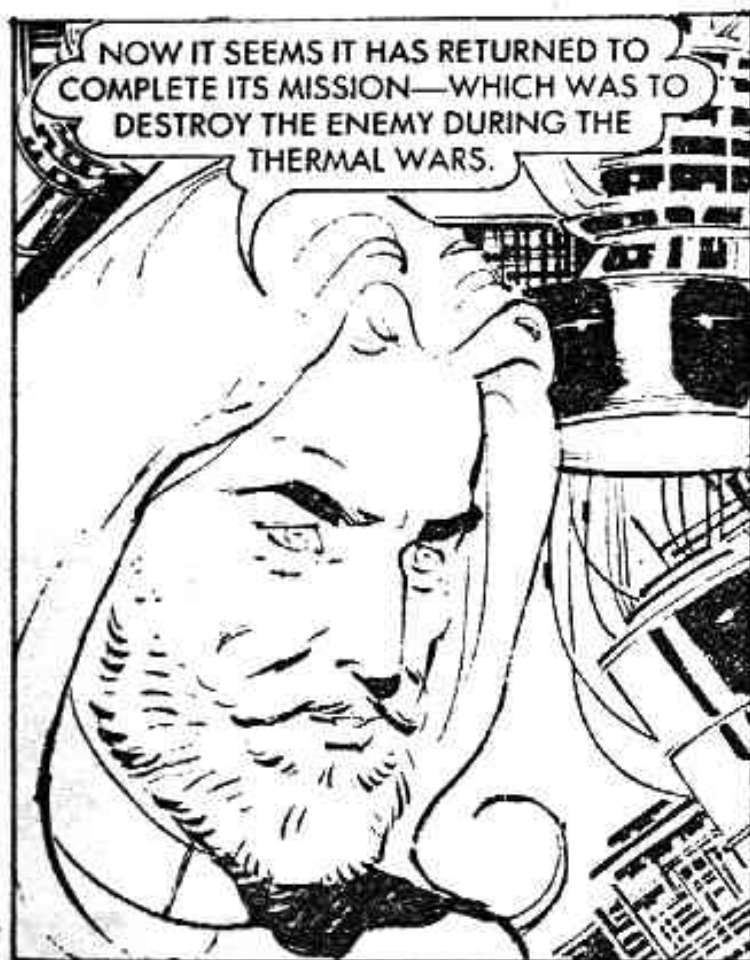


ONE OF THE BATTLESHIPS VANISHED WITHOUT  
TRACE. IT WAS A COMPLETE MYSTERY. IT WAS  
LAST SEEN FIGHTING NEAR THE DAGOS  
SYSTEM . . .









AT THAT MOMENT, AN EMPIRE DEFENCE FORCE OUTPOST ON ABERNYTE FOUND ITSELF UNDER ATTACK—





A HUGE CRAFT LANDED—

DO NOT DESTROY THE BUILDING.  
WE NEED TO CHECK THEIR DATA BANKS.

VERY WELL,  
LEADER.



THE ANDROIDS WERE WEARING ANTI-LASER ARMOUR—AND THEY WERE ARMED WITH THE MORE DESTRUCTIVE HIGH-ENERGY BEAM RIFLES.





THE OUTPOST WAS SOON CAPTURED.

IT HAS ALL  
CHANGED, LEADER.

WE HAVE BEEN  
AWAY A LONG TIME.

I HAVE FOUND THE BASE. THAT IS  
OUR NEXT TARGET—TO STRIKE AT  
THE VERY HEART OF THE ENEMY.



MEANWHILE, ON THE RESEARCH PLANET . . .



WHEN WAR WAS BANNED IT WAS  
DECIDED TO KEEP A SMALL MUSEUM TO  
REMINDE THOSE IN POWER OF THE  
FUTILITY OF ARMED CONFLICT.







THE ONLY WAY TO DEFEAT THE SYGMA WARRIOR WAS TO OUT-THINK IT—



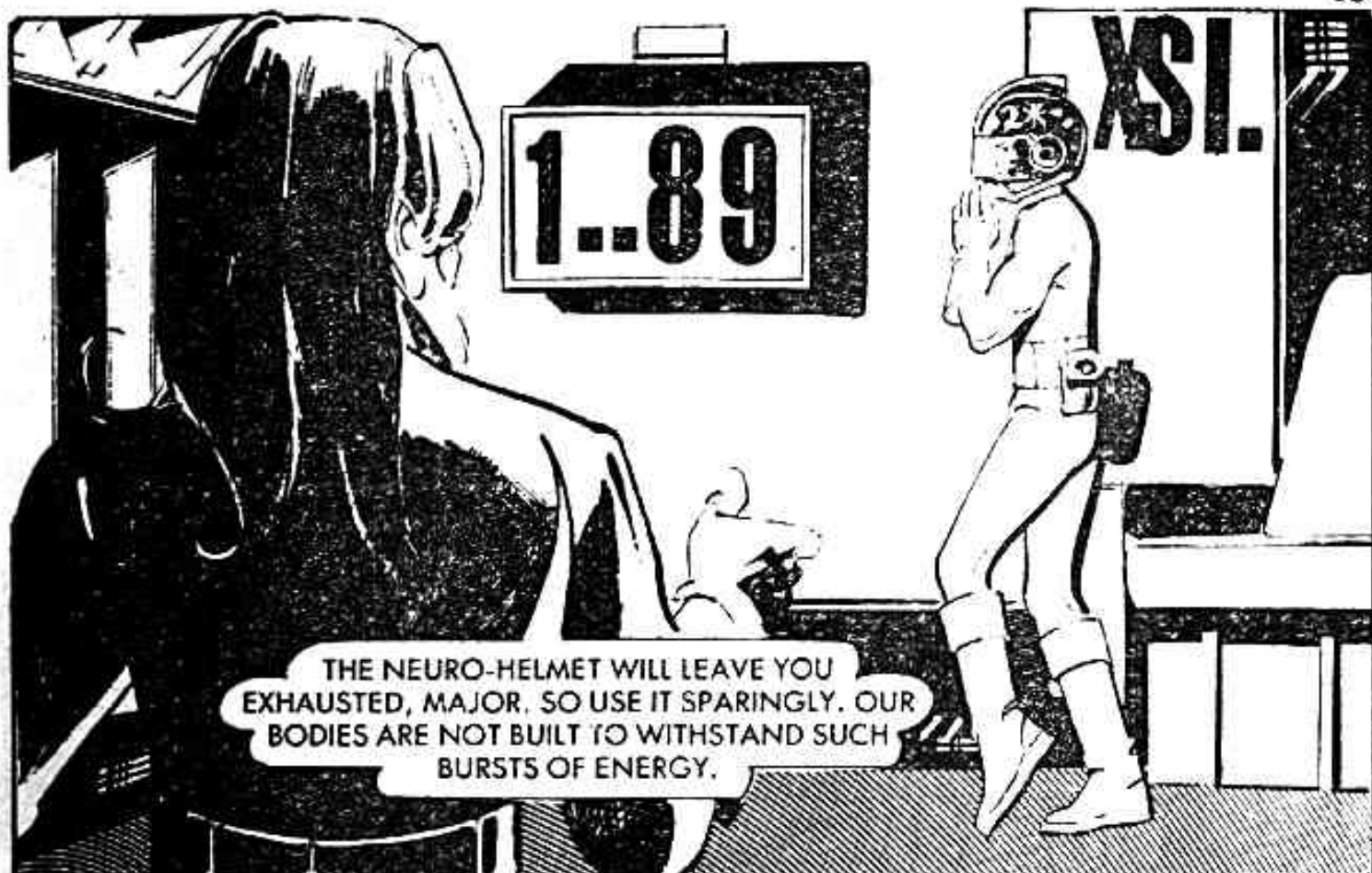
I MUST ABSORB THIS KNOWLEDGE  
IF WE ARE TO SURVIVE!

GOth WAS CAREFULLY PREPARED—



THE ANDROIDS HAVE REFLEXES FAR  
QUICKER THAN ANY HUMAN'S. SO WE'VE  
DEVELOPED THIS NEURO-HELMET TO SPEED  
UP YOUR OWN.



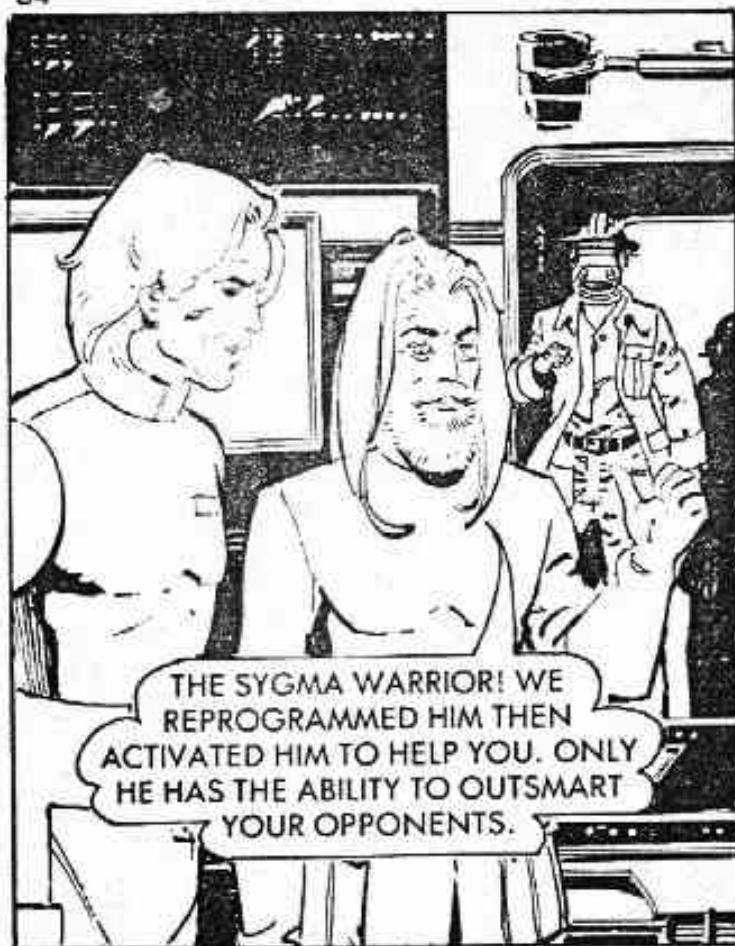


THE NEURO-HELMET WILL LEAVE YOU EXHAUSTED, MAJOR. SO USE IT SPARINGLY. OUR BODIES ARE NOT BUILT TO WITHSTAND SUCH BURSTS OF ENERGY.



NOW FOR WEAPONS! I CONVINCED THE ELDERS WE HAD TO MAKE TWO OF THESE FORBIDDEN PHOTON BEAM PISTOLS.

WHO GETS THE OTHER ONE?



TIME WAS RUNNING OUT AS THE SYGMA VI CRAFT APPROACHED—

TARGETS LOCKED AND DESTROYED, LEADER!

GOOD! IT IS PLEASING TO SEE OUR LONG JOURNEY HAS NOT DULLED OUR ABILITIES.

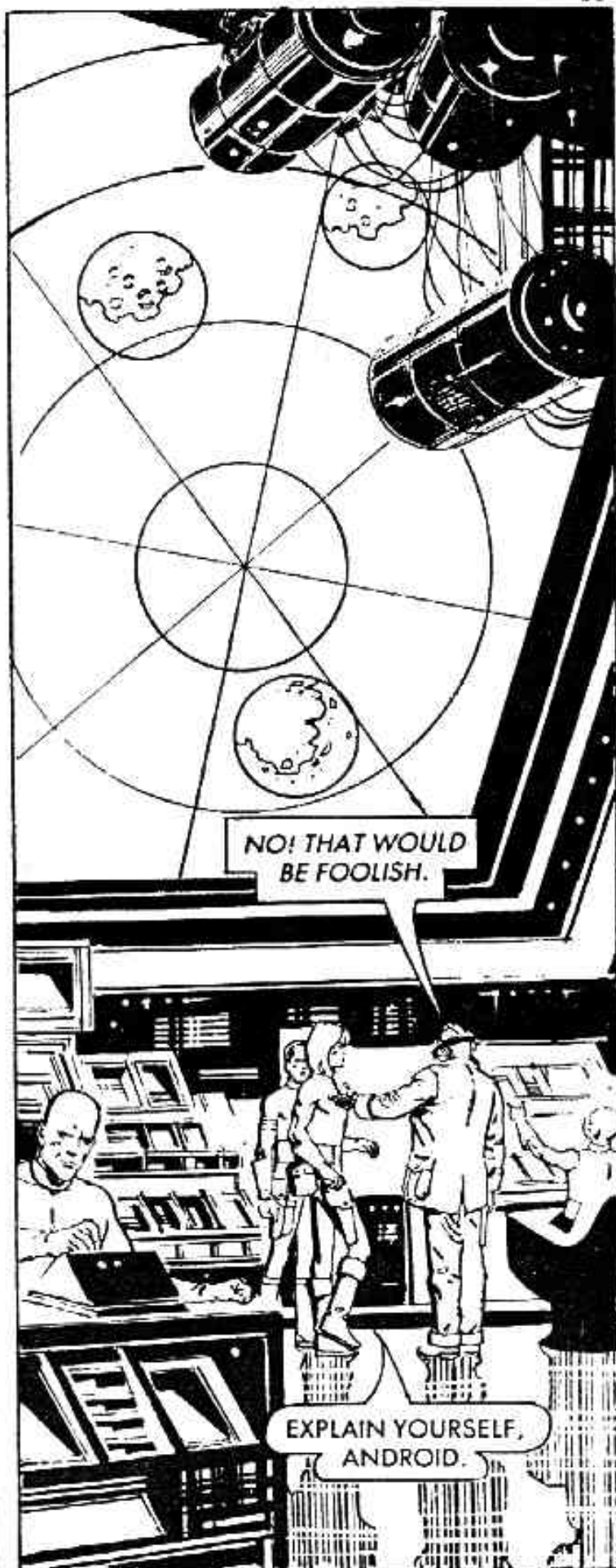




BACK AT THE EMPIRE DEFENCE FORCE  
COMMAND HEADQUARTERS . . .

THE BATTLESHIP WAS LAST  
REPORTED IN THE XERON QUADRANT . . .

LET ME TAKE OUT A FORCE  
AND MEET HER, SIR.



NO! THAT WOULD  
BE FOOLISH.

EXPLAIN YOURSELF,  
ANDROID.

THE ANDROID'S VOICE HAD A CHILLING RING TO IT—

THEY WILL BE SEEKING YOUR MAIN BASE—WHICH IS HERE. IT'S THE ONLY LOGICAL STEP THEY CAN MAKE. YOU ARE POWERLESS TO STOP THEM.



I'VE SEEN HOW WEAK YOUR EMPIRE HAS BECOME. IF YOU TRY TO OPPOSE THEM IN SPACE THEY WILL WIPE YOU OUT.



SO WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST—SURRENDER?

IF THEY WOULD LISTEN—YES. BUT THEY WON'T. WE MUST FIGHT THEM ON THE GROUND. IN THEIR BATTLESHIP THEY ARE INVINCIBLE—AS YOU HAVE LEARNED TO YOUR COST.






THE HIGH COUNCIL HAD PLACED GOTH IN CHARGE OF THE CAMPAIGN.

A black and white comic panel showing a man and a woman in a room. The woman, on the left, has blonde hair and is wearing a light-colored dress. She is looking at the man with a concerned expression. The man, on the right, has dark hair and is wearing a dark suit. He is looking at her with a serious expression. The background shows a doorway and some furniture.

HE'S RIGHT, SIR! I SUGGEST WE  
EVACUATE ALL PERSONNEL AND SET  
UP DEFENSIVE POSITIONS IN THE HILLS.

I'LL GIVE THE ORDER.

A large black and white comic panel showing a futuristic cityscape. In the foreground, a large, multi-story building with a grid-like facade is visible. A satellite dish is mounted on the side of the building. In the background, other buildings and a large, dark, spherical object in the sky are visible. The scene is set at night, with a dark sky and some stars.

I JUST HOPE  
THIS WORKS.

HOPE IS NOT A WORD I'M FAMILIAR WITH.  
I'M ONLY INTERESTED IN SUCCESS.

GOTH AND THE DROID PREPARED  
TO CONFRONT THE ROGUE WARRIORS —

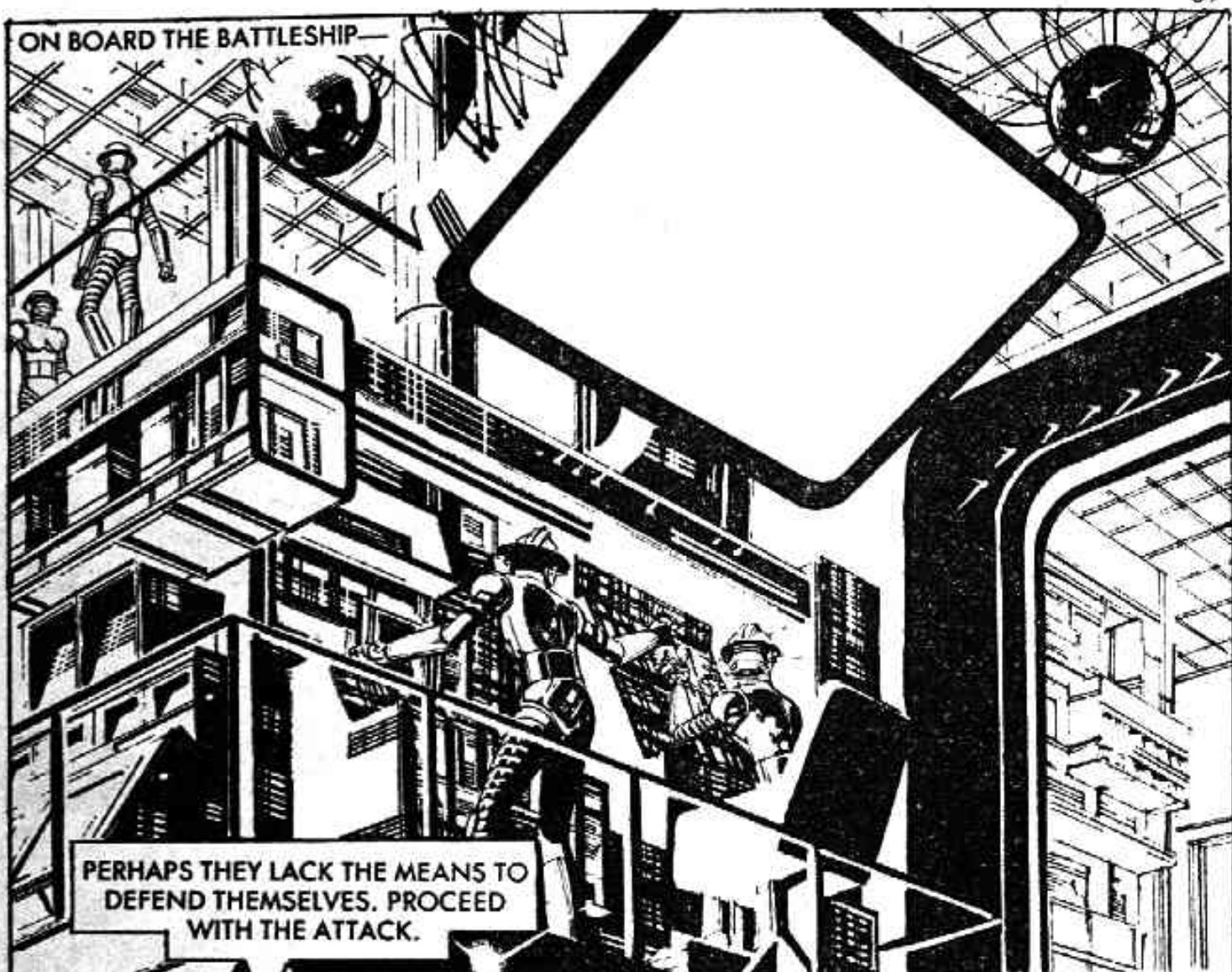


GOTH AND THE OTHERS DIDN'T HAVE LONG TO WAIT.





ON BOARD THE BATTLESHIP—



PERHAPS THEY LACK THE MEANS TO  
DEFEND THEMSELVES. PROCEED  
WITH THE ATTACK.

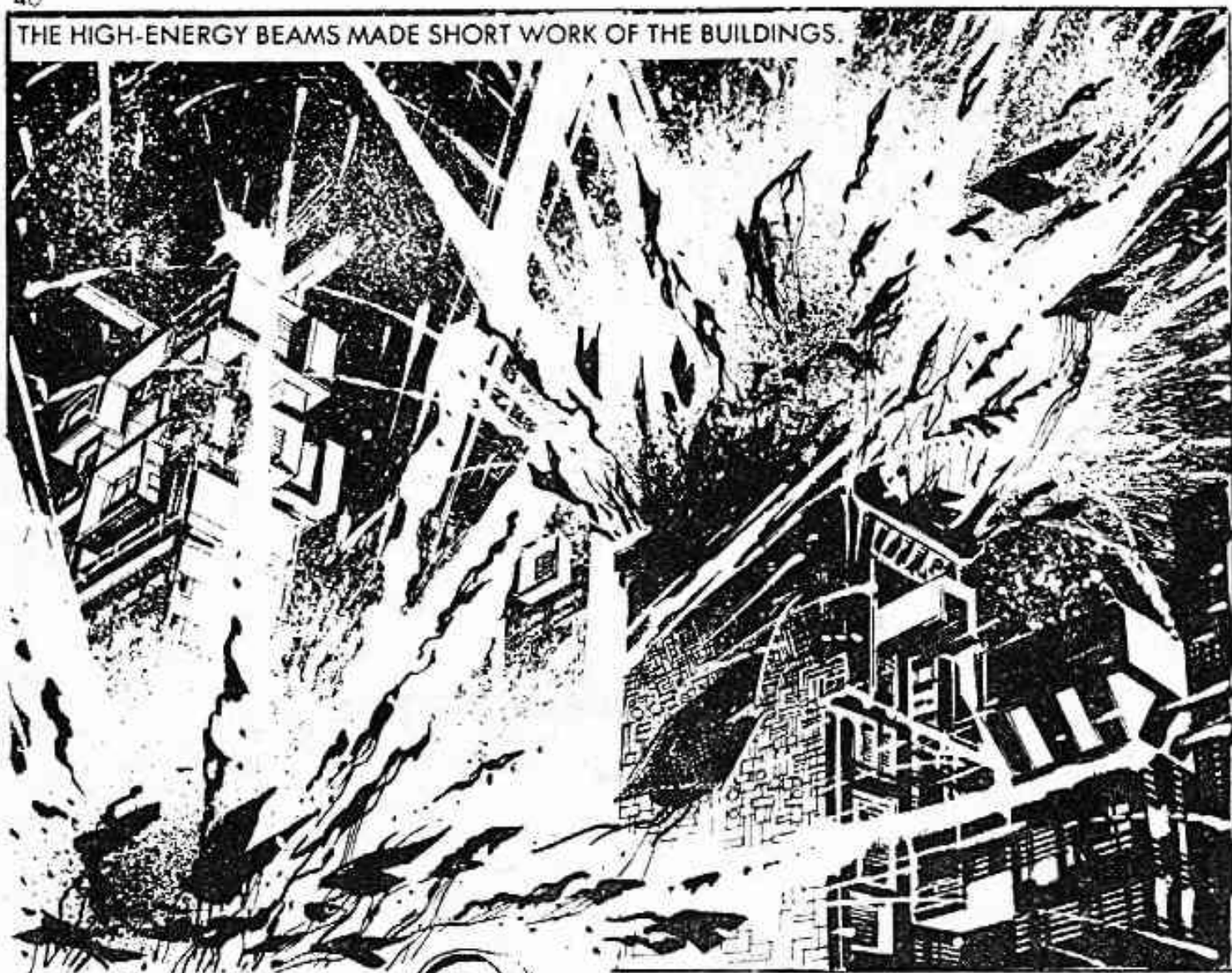


THE BOMBARDMENT BEGAN . . .



BY THE MOONS OF SYRIUS! WE  
GOT OUT OF THERE JUST IN TIME!

THE HIGH-ENERGY BEAMS MADE SHORT WORK OF THE BUILDINGS.



IT DIDN'T TAKE THEM LONG TO RAZE THAT PLACE TO THE GROUND!

OF COURSE NOT! YOU HAVE JUST WITNESSED AN EXAMPLE OF THE EFFICIENT USE OF FORCE.







THE BEAM HIT WITH DEADLY ACCURACY—



THEY'VE SPOTTED US!

GOTH SAW THE SHUTTLE LAND NOT FAR AWAY.

GET READY, MEN! THEY'RE GOING TO ATTACK US ON FOOT.

THIS IS WHERE I MUST LEAVE YOU, MAJOR.



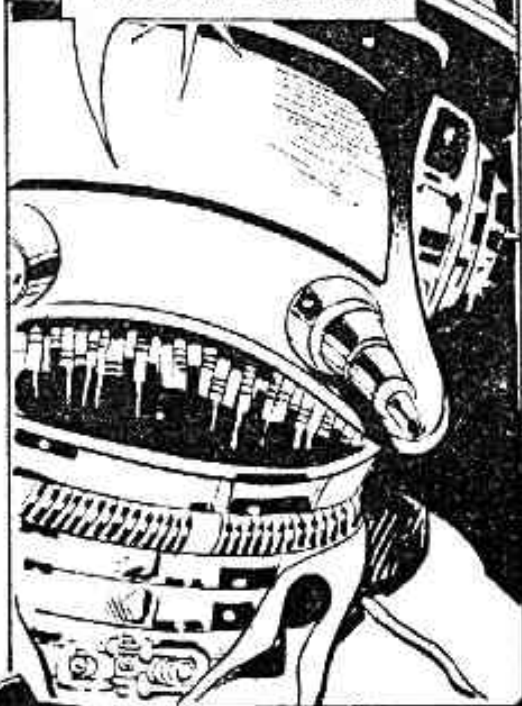
FOR A MOMENT GOTH FEARED THE ANDROID WAS DESERTING THEM TO JOIN ITS OWN KIND—



RELAX, HUMAN. I HAVE BEEN PROGRAMMED TO DEFEND YOU. I MERELY INTEND TO TAKE THAT SHUTTLE AND CAPTURE THE BATTLESHIP.

ALONE?

THEIR SHIP HAS A CREW OF ONLY TWENTY—AND MOST OF THEM WILL BE DOWN HERE IN THE ATTACK PARTY. I DO NOT EXPECT TO FIND MUCH OPPOSITION.



THEIR SENSORS WILL INDICATE AN ANDROID ABOARD THE SHUTTLE—AND THEY'LL ASSUME IT'S ONE OF THEIRS.




GOOD THINKING.

THE ATTACK BEGAN . . .

CONCENTRATE YOUR LASERS ON  
ONE TARGET—THAT WAY YOU'LL  
GET THROUGH THEIR BODY ARMOUR.

YES, SIR!







BUT GOTH'S JOY WAS SHORT LIVED AS THE ANDROIDS PRESSED HOME THEIR ATTACK—







A FAMILIAR VOICE CAME THROUGH GOTH'S HELMET INTERCOM.

YOU MAY COME ABOARD WHENEVER YOU ARE READY, MAJOR GOTH. THE BATTLESHIP IS UNDER MY CONTROL. I'LL SEND THE SHUTTLE DOWN TO COLLECT YOU.



GOTH COULD HARDLY BELIEVE IT WAS ALL OVER—

THE ANDROID MUST HAVE TURNED THEIR GUNS AGAINST THEM!



AFTER GOTH HAD RESTED FROM THE EFFECTS OF THE NEURO-HELMET . . .

OUR NEXT JOB IS TO DESTROY THIS SHIP.

IF I MAY SAY THAT IS HIGHLY ILLOGICAL.



EXPLAIN!

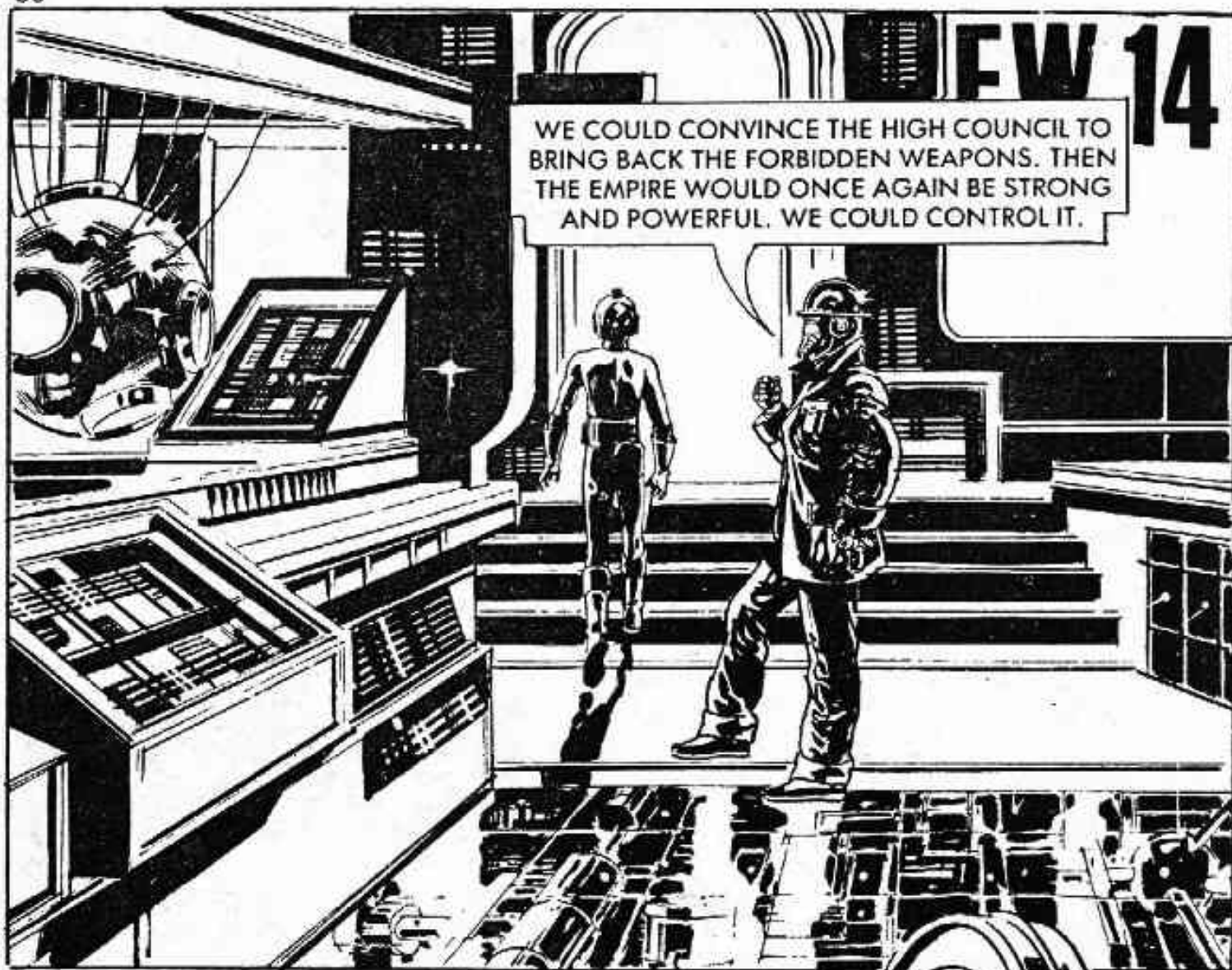




SO WHAT ARE YOU SUGGESTING?

THAT WE JOIN FORCES  
—YOU AND I.







IT WAS A NEW EXPERIENCE, BUT THE DESTRUCTION OF SO MANY PEOPLE IS NOT RIGHT, I'M NOT A MACHINE WITHOUT EMOTION. WAR IS WRONG . . .



THE ANDROID SENSED DANGER, BUT GOTH'S HELMET ENABLED HIM TO MATCH HIS OPPONENT'S SPEED.

**WILL**

. . . AND YOU ARE A MACHINE BUILT FOR WAR.



IT WAS GOTH WHO FIRED FIRST.



I LOST A LOT OF GOOD MEN DOWN THERE!  
SUCH THINGS MUST NEVER HAPPEN  
AGAIN!

YOU FOOL!



MY ORDERS WERE TO  
TERMINATE YOU.

LOGICAL. HAVING REACTIVATED ME,  
THE HIGH COUNCIL MUST HAVE  
REALISED I WOULD POSE A THREAT.



THE ANDROID DISPLAYED NO EMOTION—

YOU SAVED THE EMPIRE AND  
DESERVE A BETTER REWARD.

SO WHAT DO YOU PROPOSE TO DO  
WITH ME?

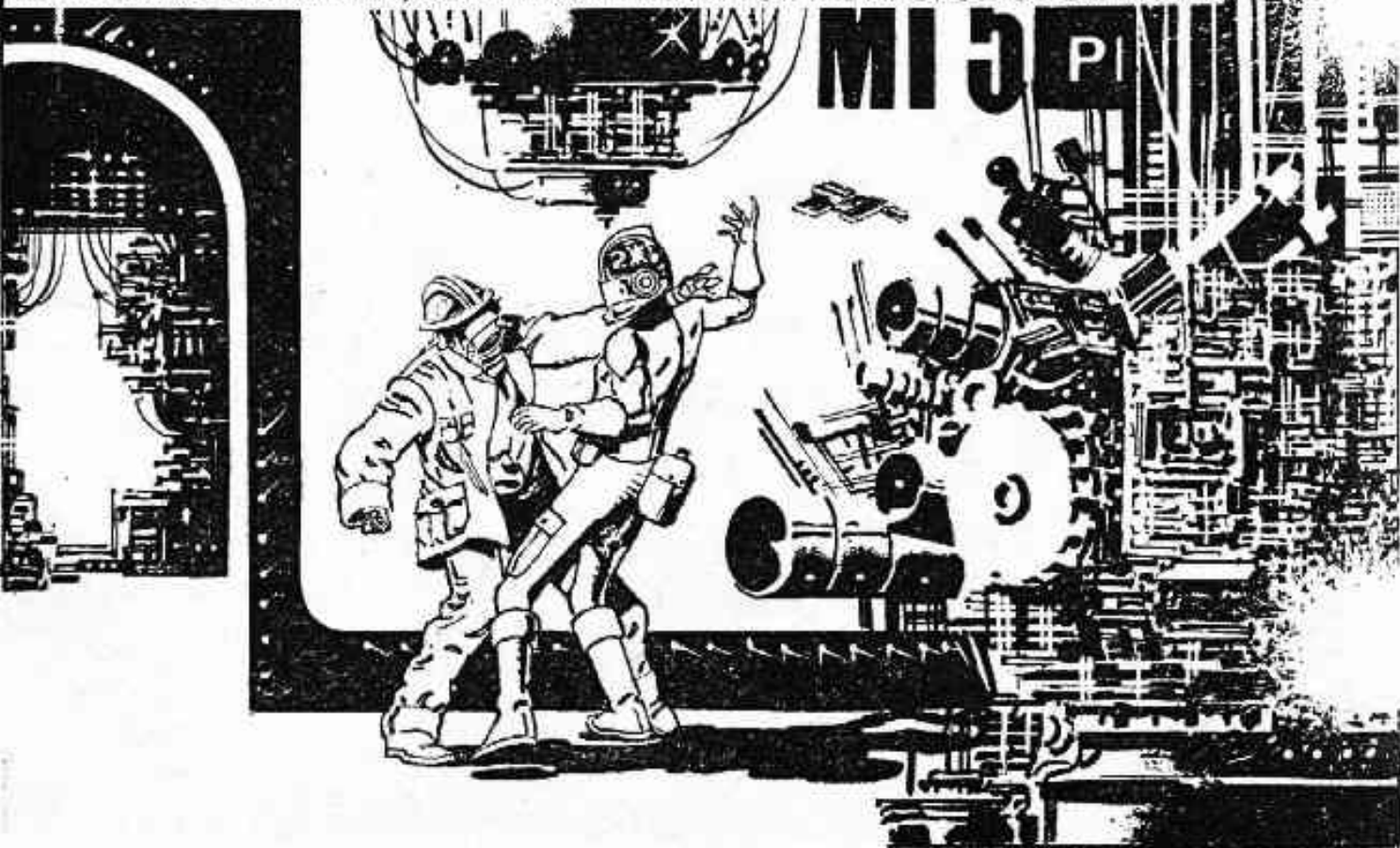
I'M GOING TO LET YOU GO. IF YOU  
PROMISE TO LEAVE THIS GALAXY  
AND NEVER RETURN.

VERY WELL,  
MAJOR GOTH.

TO GOTH'S AMAZEMENT THE ANDROID SHOWED EMOTION.

I WILL TAKE THE EMERGENCY ESCAPE CRAFT. IT HAS SUFFICIENT FUEL FOR MY NEEDS. I'M GRATEFUL FOR THIS CHANCE YOU HAVE GIVEN ME.

MOMENTARILY DISTRACTED, GOTH WASN'T READY FOR THE ANDROID'S NEXT MOVE.







GOTH'S SPEED ENABLED HIM TO GET FREE. THE WALLS OF THE SHIP WERE PROTECTED AGAINST ENERGY BEAMS—OTHERWISE THE ANDROID'S SHOT COULD HAVE DEPRESSURISED THE ENTIRE SECTION.



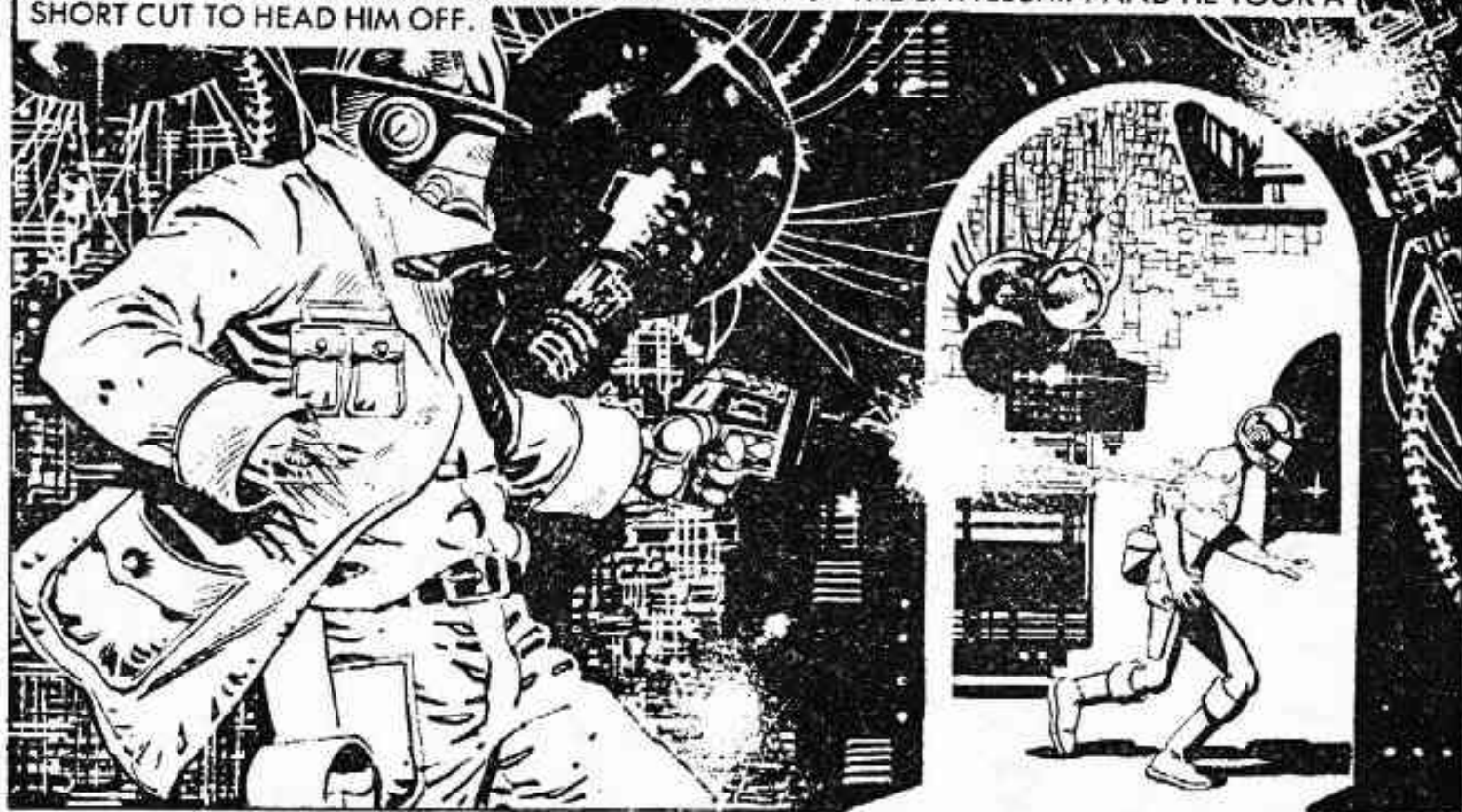
YOU CANNOT ESCAPE FROM  
ME, MAJOR GOTH!



I MUST GET BACK TO THE CONTROL  
ROOM! THERE ARE WEAPONS THERE.



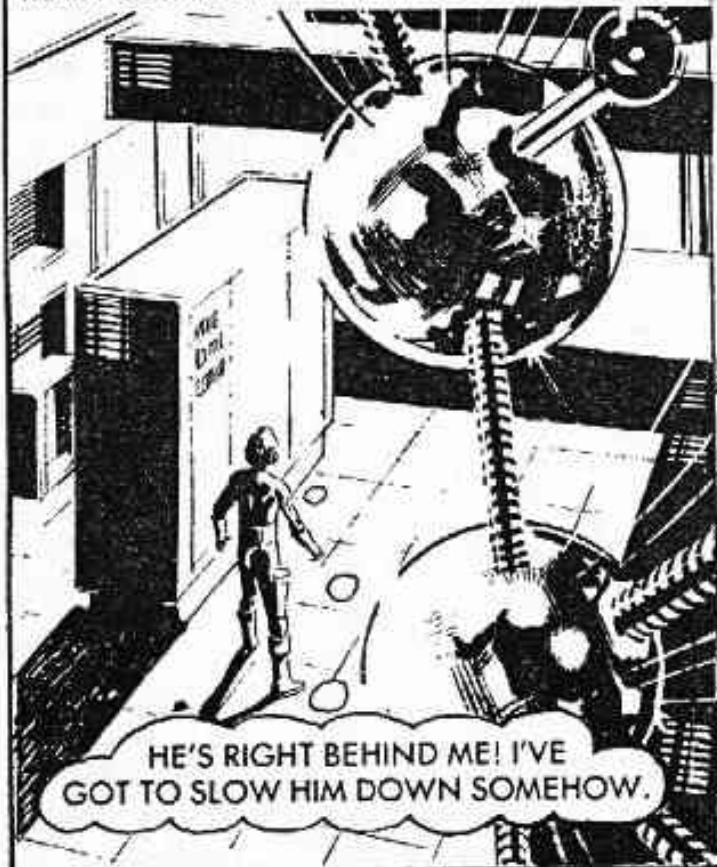
BUT THE ANDROID WAS FAMILIAR WITH THE LAYOUT OF THE BATTLESHIP. AND HE TOOK A SHORT CUT TO HEAD HIM OFF.



HE JUST NICKED ME THAT TIME! BUT IT WON'T BE LONG BEFORE HE FINISHES ME OFF.



BLIND INSTINCT LED GOTH BACK TO THE MAIN CORRIDOR FROM THE CONTROL ROOM.



HE USED THE OLDEST TRICK IN THE BOOK—

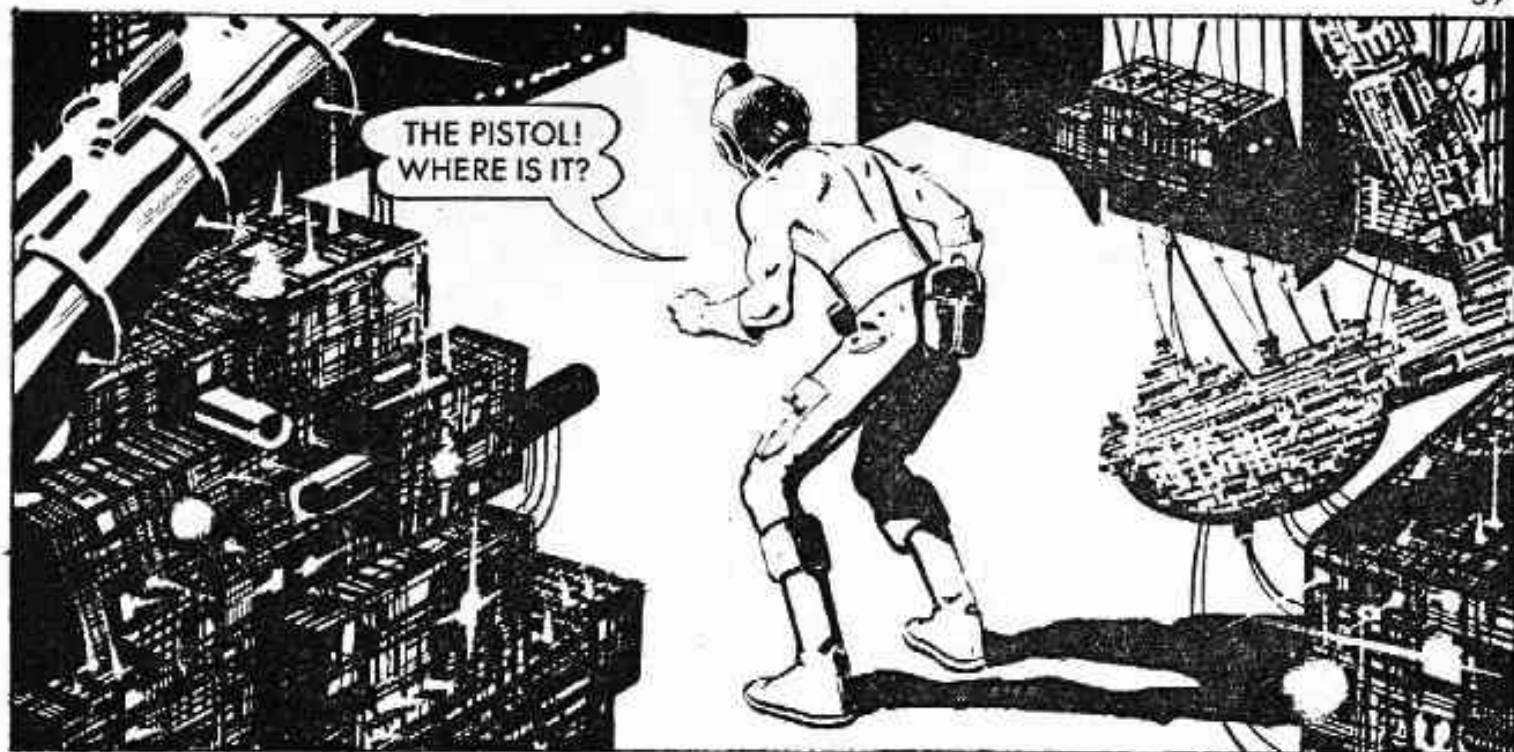


THE HEAVY CABINET WOULD HAVE CRUSHED AN ORDINARY MAN.

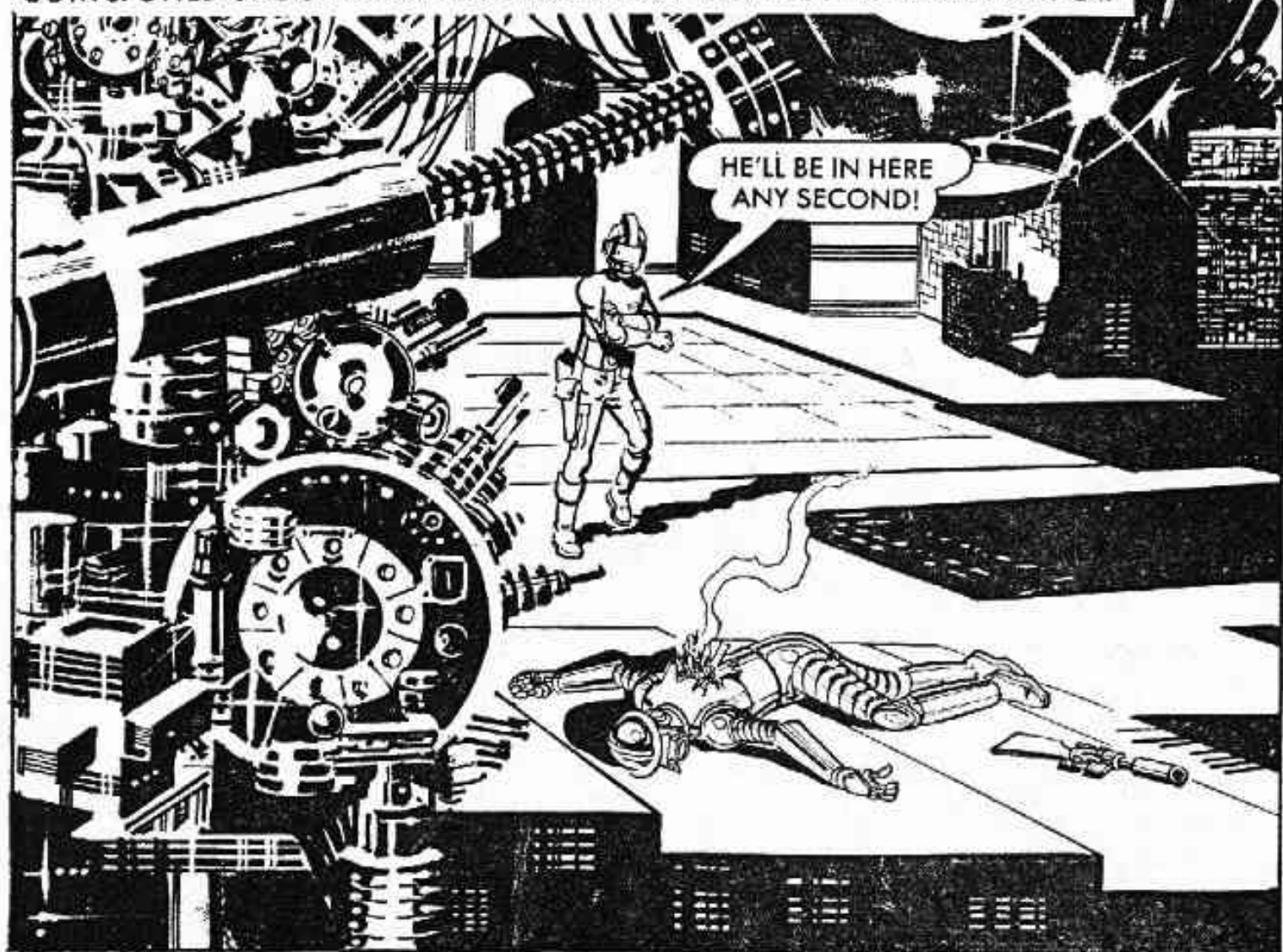
THAT WAS FOOLISH SINCE MY BODY IS CONSIDERABLY STRONGER THAN YOURS!



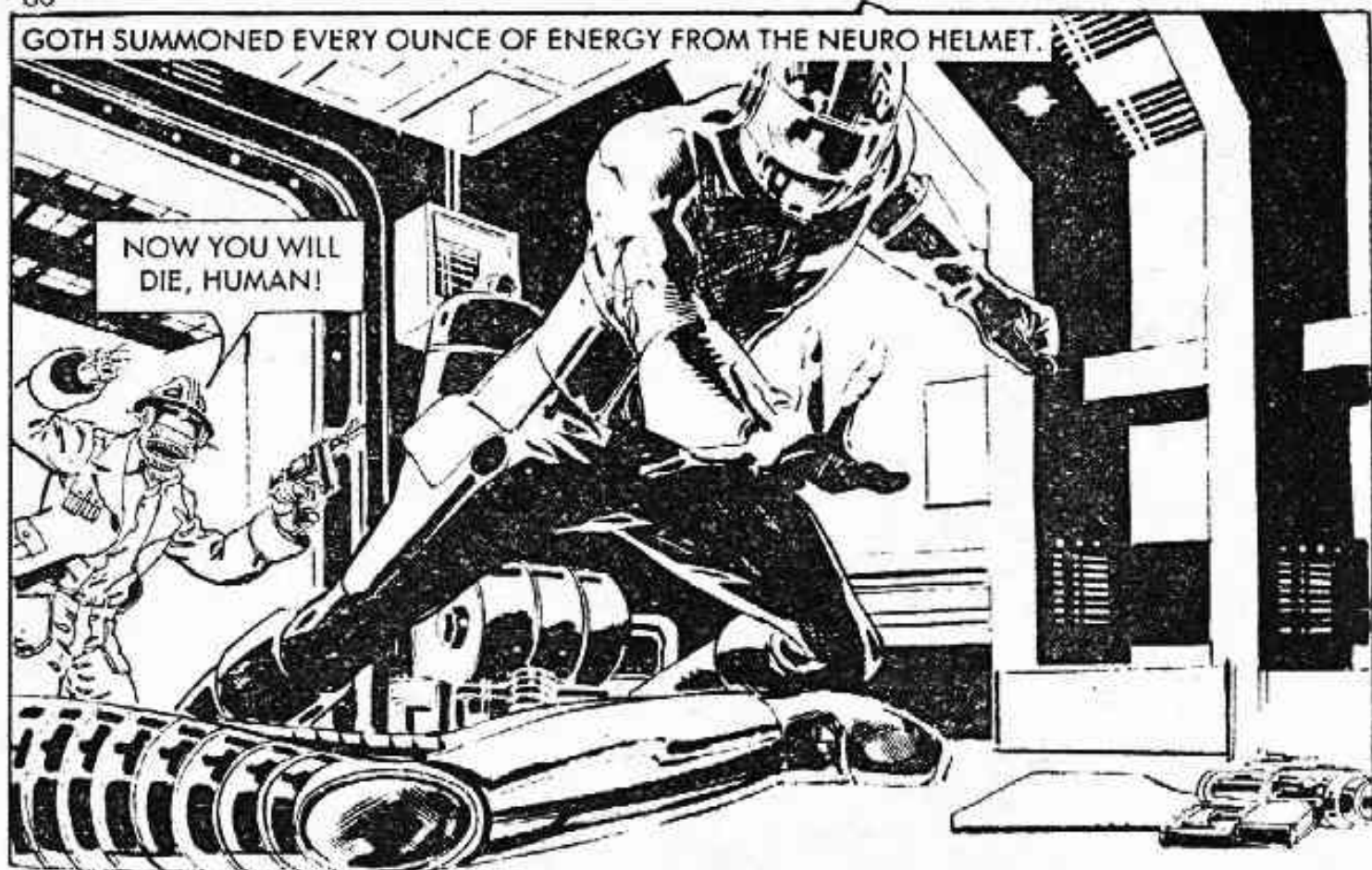




GOTH SPOTTED ONE OF THE ANDROID CREW TERMINATED BY HIS FORMER PARTNER!



GOTH SUMMONED EVERY OUNCE OF ENERGY FROM THE NEURO HELMET.



NOW YOU WILL  
DIE, HUMAN!

ONCE AGAIN GOTH'S SPEED SAVED HIS LIFE.



MISSED!

YOU CANNOT HOPE TO DEFEAT  
A SYGMA WARRIOR!





IT WAS GOTH'S COMPASSION FOR HIS FORMER PARTNER THAT ALMOST LED TO HIS DEATH, BUT THAT SAME COMPASSION MARKED THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THEM.

YOU WERE JUST A MACHINE OF DESTRUCTION.  
IT WASN'T YOUR FAULT—IT WAS THE FAULT OF  
THOSE WHO DESIGNED YOU.

JUST THEN . . .

THAT ENERGY BEAM HE FIRED  
MUST HAVE HIT THE CONTROLS!



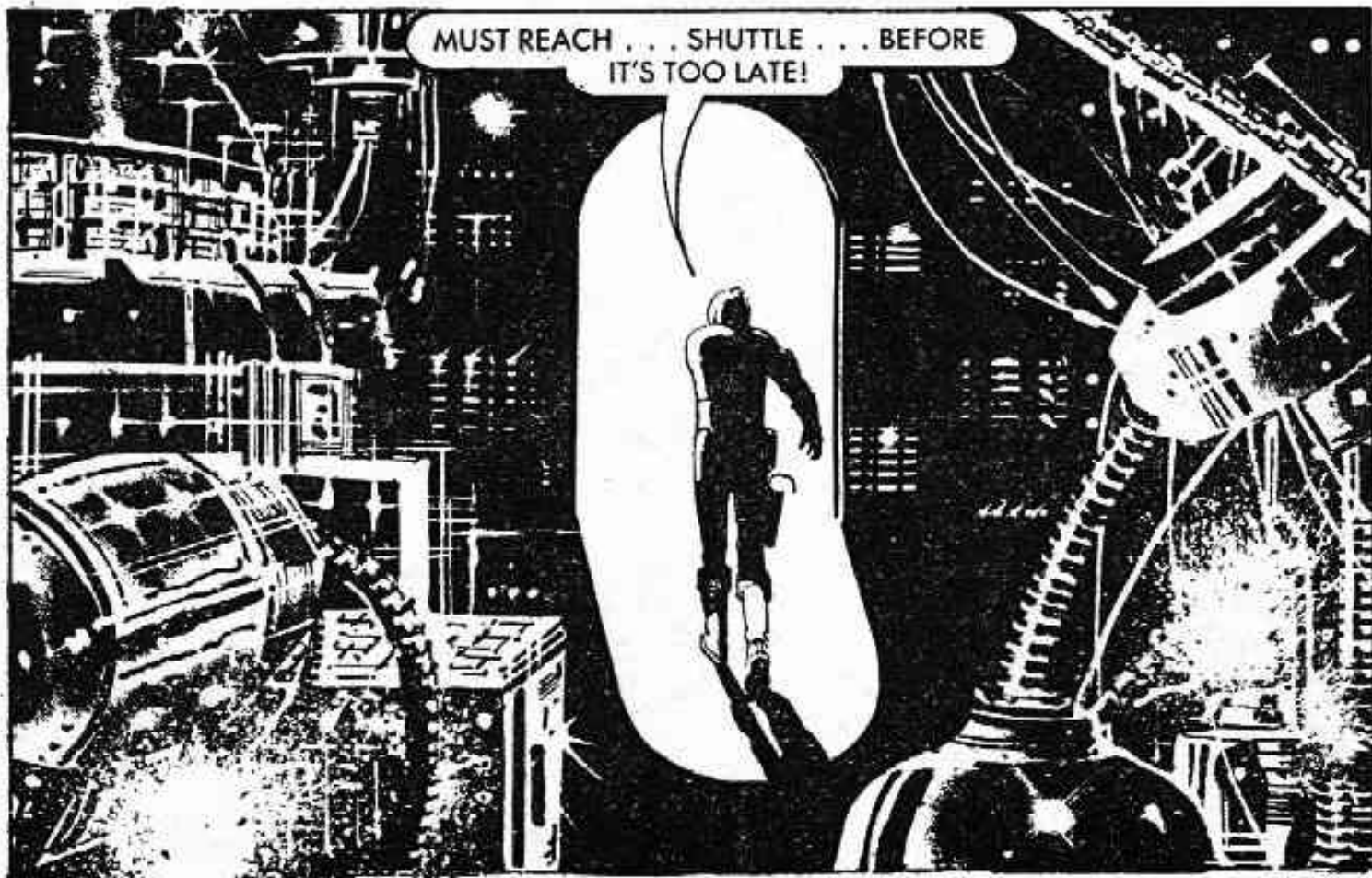
USING THE HELMET HAD LEFT GOTH FEELING TOTALLY EXHAUSTED—

Q75



MAIN COMPUTER . . . REPORTS THAT THE  
DAMAGE . . . IS CAUSING THE ENGINE  
SHIELDS TO DECAY. THE SHIP IS  
ABOUT . . . TO BLOW UP!

MUST REACH . . . SHUTTLE . . . BEFORE  
IT'S TOO LATE!



ALARMS WERE RINGING ALL OVER THE SHIP.

I'M . . . SO TIRED.



THE SHUTTLE WAS ONLY A FEW FEET AWAY, BUT TO GOTH IT COULD HAVE BEEN ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE UNIVERSE.

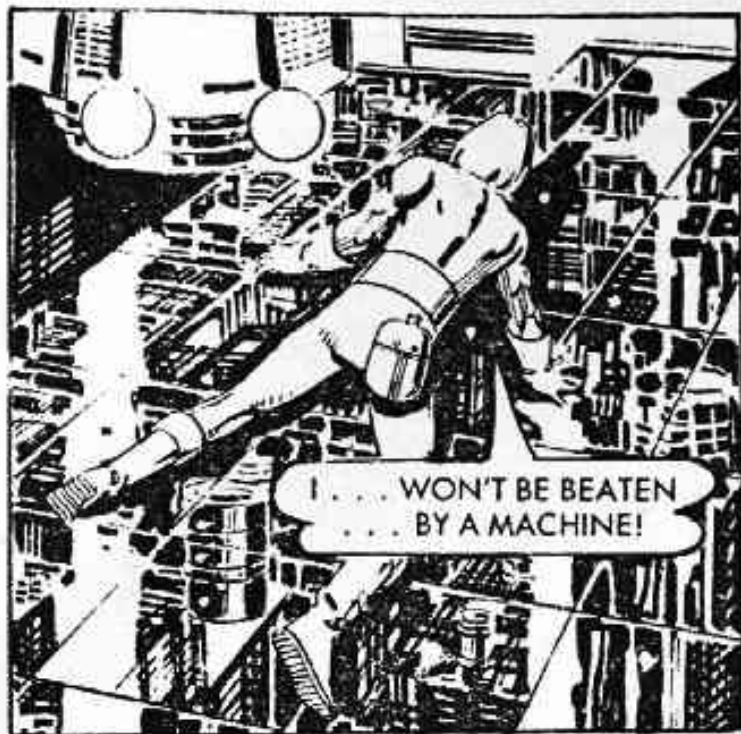


ON THE VERGE OF UNCONSCIOUSNESS GOTH REMEMBERED THE ANDROID'S WORDS.

YOU CANNOT DEFEAT A  
SYGMA WARRIOR!







WITH SUPERHUMAN EFFORT GOTH MANAGED TO CRAWL INTO THE SHUTTLE AND BLAST OFF—

A FEW MONTHS LATER MAJOR GOTH WAS BACK ON ROUTINE PATROL.

THIS WILL BE BORING AFTER WHAT  
YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH, SIR.

BORING, LAD? THERE'S NOTHING EXCITING ABOUT KILLING. WAR IS STUPID,  
AND THE STUPIDEST PART OF THE WHOLE SITUATION IS THAT  
GOVERNMENTS REALLY BELIEVE THAT POSSESSION OF THE ULTIMATE  
WEAPON WILL GUARANTEE PEACE. IT'S UP TO US TO MAKE SURE THAT NO  
NATION EVER POSSESSES THAT WEAPON.



DON'T MISS THIS MONTH'S  
OTHER *ACTION-PACKED*  
ADVENTURE



NOW  
ON  
SALE



Do you have a favourite story or character? Perhaps you'd like to drop a line to Starblazer's head droid telling him why you liked, or disliked a story. Fill in the coupon below, or copy it out on a piece of paper and send it to: STARBLAZER, D. C. THOMSON AND CO. LTD., 185 FLEET ST., LONDON EC4A 2HS.

NAME ..... AGE .....  
FAVOURITE STORY .....  
FAVOURITE CHARACTER .....  
COMMENTS .....



# STARBLAZER'S

GUIDE TO THE SPACEMEN

*Soyuz 29 was launched on June 15, 1978 and the mission lasted 139 days 14 hours 48 mins. One of those on board was Alexander S. Ivanchenkov, 37, who also flew Soyuz T6 on a 7 day 22 hour 42 min. mission on June 24, 1982.*

88

